

WHY BEING A LICENSED OR REGISTERED CHILD CARE PROVIDER MATTERS



Licensed and registered child care providers are essential to ensuring employee's children are cared for in a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment, yet not all individuals provided child care services hold a child care license or registration¹. Employers should be knowledgeable of the benefits licensed and registered child care businesses offer. Below you will find a list of reasons why supporting licensed and registered child care businesses is important.



LEGAL OPERATION

Per Montana law, providers can care for up to two unrelated children or all of the children from one family without being registered or licensed. If a providers plans to care for three or more children, they must be registered or licensed. Facilities operating unlicensed or unregistered may be subject to penalty.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Child care businesses are regulated by the Department of Health and Human Services. Licensure rules and regulations ensure all child care business are providing a safe and healthy environment for the children in their care. On-site inspections are conducted annually.

CPR AND FIRST AID

All staff must have a current certification for infant, child, and adult CPR, infant choking response, and pediatric first aid. CPR certification must be completed in a hands-on setting.

BACKGROUND CHECK

All staff and adults present at child care facilities must have satisfactory FBI Fingerprint-based background check results to work or be present at a child care facility.

ADULT TO CHILD RATIO

Child care ratios are the number of adults that need to be present in a facility to support the health and safety of young children in care. Ratio requirements vary depending on facility type and ages of children.

BEST BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP

Families eligible for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship², which helps pay the cost of child care, are only able to use licensed or registered child care providers.



CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Licensed and registered child care providers can participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which ensures nutritional meals are being served. The CACFP offers training, resources, and support and conducts on-site inspections.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Licensed and registered providers are eligible to participate in the STARS to Quality Program. This program provides support, coaching, resources, and monetary incentives to help increase the quality of care being provided.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

There are many different entities such as child care resource and referral agencies, Raise Montana, and Zero to Five Montana that offer a variety of supports, resources, training, and consultation services.

EDUCATION INCENTIVES

The Early Childhood Project (ECP) offers various monetary incentives around educational advancements. One example is the Professional Development Incentive Award-Higher Education which provides scholarships for the completion of early childhood college credits.

GRANTS, LOANS, AND INCENTIVES

Licensed and registered providers may be eligible to utilize loan programs, access to grant funding, and scholarship to continue professional development. They may also qualify for other specialized monetary incentives.

FUTURE WORKFORCE

Children attending licensed or registered child care facilities are being cared for in a safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate environments. This provides the foundation for children to be successful later in life.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Every one dollar invested in quality early childhood programs can yield returns up to 16 dollars.³

**This material has been prepared for informational purposes only, and is not intended to provide tax, legal or accounting advice. For the most accurate information, individuals and businesses consult their own tax, legal, and accounting advisors.*

This project is funded in whole or in part under a contract with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Department.



RESOURCES

Early Childhood Services Bureau
dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/childcare/

Child Care Licensing
dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/childcare/childcarelicensing/index

Raise Montana
www.raisemt.org

Zero to Five Montana
<https://www.zerotofive.org>

Child Care Resource & Referral
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/childcare/childcareresourceandreferral>

Child and Adult Care Food Program
dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/childcare/cacfp/index

Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship Program
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/childcare/BestBeginningsScholarships>

1. Preschool programs are not required to be licensed or registered with the State of Montana, but may still offer high-quality care.
2. The Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship is a state funded subsidy program administered through the Early Childhood Services Bureau in the Department of Public Health and Human Services.
3. Economist Professor James Heckman has shown the early childhood return on investment through extensive research <https://heckmanequation.org/>.